

# Community Newsletter

March 2023 Edition



## Note from Mayor Meghan F. George



In Lakewood, public safety is always top of mind. That priority on safety takes many forms, and I'd like to take some time to highlight two important programs that we launched last year to be proactive in protecting some of our most vulnerable Lakewood residents. Those programs are our Car Seat Fit Stop and our Neighborhood Paramedic Program, both provided by our top notch Lakewood Fire Department.

In July, our fire department began offering the Car Seat Fit Stop again, a program that had existed in the past and was brought back to help parents and caregivers ensure that child safety seats are properly installed. Our firefighters perform the installations, engaging in dialogue with program participants while they work to show the best methods to set up the car seats. With so many different models (our fire department are aware of at least 80 models currently in the market), it can be difficult for parents and caregivers to know

what to look for to make things as safe as possible. Our firefighters also go over some helpful tips on general child safety while working on the car seats – it's a great opportunity to talk broadly with residents about how we can all work together to keep kids safe.

Currently, seven fire department members have been certified through the national Child Passenger Safety Technician training program to provide this vital service. The Fire Department is hosting a Fit Stop event every month, doing so on weekends to make it easier for families to participate. In only a few months of operation, our Lakewood firefighters have helped dozens of families through this fantastic program. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please visit the City website ([lakewoodoh.gov/car-seat-fit-stop/](http://lakewoodoh.gov/car-seat-fit-stop/)) to find out more or sign up for a future Fit Stop session.

Last year, we also launched the Neighborhood Paramedic program to address key health and safety needs across the community, with a focus on proactive, preventative healthcare. Our human services and safety forces had observed a serious gap in Lakewood's health and wellness environment, where preventable injuries and controllable medical issues were not being addressed. Instead, the first time issues with vulnerable members of the community were coming to light was with a hospital visit or worse, a trip to the emergency room.

The City sees this program as a wise investment that has provided immediate impact and that will have long-term benefits. We were also fortunate (and grateful) to receive a \$70,000 grant from the Healthy Lakewood Foundation to help pay a part of the program's startup costs.

The Neighborhood Paramedic program kicked off in August with a special focus on home visits with seniors to prevent trip-and-fall situations within residences. This was a strategic choice that we hope has high effect. For context, keep in mind that in 2021 alone, Lakewood EMS responded to over 650 calls for seniors with fall injuries, most of which were serious enough to require transport to a hospital or emergency room.

Since the program began just six months ago, our Neighborhood Paramedic has been in touch with 170 individuals, and our specialized fall prevention/safety focus has led to 40 in-home consultations. That has led to interventions to reduce risks of falling (e.g., things as simple as lowering the height of a bed), but also allowed our paramedic to discover other challenges facing seniors, the disabled, and those on limited incomes, and then connect them to essential health care and other social services. Those interested in learning more about the program or scheduling a home visit should reach out to [ldnp@lakewoodoh.net](mailto:ldnp@lakewoodoh.net) or call 216-659-0009.

I'm very thankful for the great team we have at the Lakewood Fire Department, who are always looking for new and innovative ways to keep us all safe, prevent dangerous situations, and encourage health and wellness. The high use of these two new programs is encouraging, and we hope to get more people to benefit from them, so please spread the word.

Mayor Meghan F. George

## Upcoming Events & Updates

### Friday, March 11 - Cookies with a Cop

Bring your kids and join members of the Lakewood Police Department for Cookies with a Cop on Saturday, March 11 from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. at Weaving Supplies & Art Studio, 15014 Madison Avenue. Enjoy a locally made cookie while you chat with officers. Kids will have a fun puppet craft to do while they are enjoying their cookie.



### Sunday, March 12- Car Seat Safety Check

The City of Lakewood Fire Department is hosting a Car Seat Safety Check 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Fire Station #1, 14601 Madison Avenue. This free event is open to Lakewood families who are interested in having fire department personnel install their child safety seats installed or checked for proper set up. Click [here](#) to register.



## Lake Avenue Property Update

The City of Lakewood recently closed on the purchase of a large residential parcel at 12984 Lake Avenue. The acquisition will serve the dual purpose of preserving one of Lakewood's most historic homes (dating back to the 1870s) while simultaneously advancing the City's Integrated Wet Weather Intervention Plan in a way that saves ratepayers millions of dollars.

The City's plan for the property, which includes over 1.6 acres, is to use a portion of the land to build out underground sewer infrastructure and retain that portion for the on-going operation and maintenance. The City will then put a historic restriction on the home and sell the remaining property to a private owner who will restore the home. Although the sewer project is still several years away from beginning design, the City intends to split the property and sell the remainder with the home later this year.

The City was thrilled when this property became available because it allowed us to achieve multiple important goals in one fell swoop. The historic house was at high risk of being bought by developers who might tear it down to build density on this rare large-scale Lakewood parcel. By making this purchase, the City has now ensured that this historic home will be maintained and continue to add to Lakewood's character. In addition, this will save our sewer ratepayers millions by updating our plan for wet weather and sewer infrastructure because this

property offers key advantages and costs savings that were previously unavailable and unattainable.

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## Cove Community Center Partners with Colors+

In partnership with Colors+, an LGBTQ+ Youth Center in Fairview Park, the Cove Community Center is hosting two regular programs for families in the Lakewood community.



Connections Drop-In is an open afterschool space where youth from ages 11-19 can enjoy connecting with one another while focusing on emotional, social, and mental wellness skills in a judgement free environment. Connections Drop-in is held at the Cove Community Center on Mondays from 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Parent Connections provides an environment for parents/caregivers to gather in discussion to support one another and learn how to support a child who has come out as trans, gender expansive, or when a child is beginning to quest their LGBTQ+ identity. This group meets on the second Monday of each month from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

For more information about these programs please contact Jessica Parker at [jessica.parker@lakewoodoh.net](mailto:jessica.parker@lakewoodoh.net) or 216-529-5018.

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## Lakewood Safety Forces Give Back



On Saturday, February 25th a team of volunteers from the Lakewood Police Department participated in the 2023 Cleveland Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Ohio.

Team Lakewood Copsicles took the plunge to freeze for a good cause and raised more than \$2,000 for Special Olympics Ohio. They also came in first place in the costume contest, earning a golden toilet plunger for the City of Lakewood.

The Lakewood Fire Department was also giving back on Saturday, February 25th at the Fight for Air Stair Climb in Columbus to benefit the American Lung Association. Participants climbed 880 steps up 40 floors of the Rhodes Tower in Columbus and the LFD team represented our community well by ranking among the top performers for the Firefighter/First Responder teams.

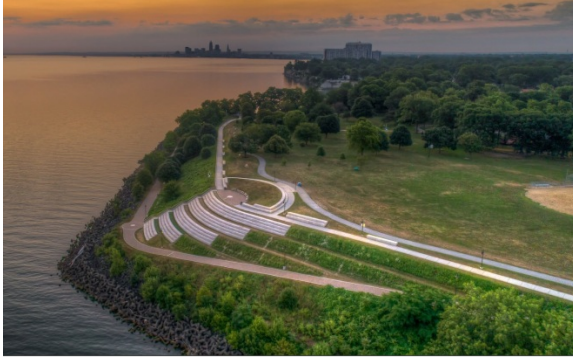


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## Lakewood Park Waterfront Access Feasibility Study Public Meeting

The Master Plan for Lakewood Park contemplates additional amenities that will improve waterfront access to Lake Erie. As





such, the City of Lakewood, with assistance from the State of Ohio Department of Natural Resources through their Coastal Management Assistance Grant program, has initiated a study to examine potential projects that would improve waterfront access. Please mark your calendars and join us on **Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 6:00pm** for a virtual public meeting to kick-off the Lakewood Park Waterfront Access Feasibility Study. The City's consultant, SmithGroup, will lead us through an information sharing and public input gathering session that

will help guide how this study moves forward. The meeting link will be placed on the City's calendar the day before the meeting. You can find the City's calendar at [www.lakewoodoh.gov/calendar/](http://www.lakewoodoh.gov/calendar/). If you have questions ahead of this meeting, please contact the Planning & Development Department at (216) 529-6630 or via email at [planning@lakewoodoh.net](mailto:planning@lakewoodoh.net).

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## Parks Ambassadors Program

The City of Lakewood is working with new partner, Block by Block for the Parks Ambassador Program this spring and we are looking for individuals to serve as park ambassadors to staff city parks during the warm weather months. These ambassadors, titled Neighborhood Safety Specialists, will add safety services outside of traditional uniformed officers which helps to achieve a holistic approach to public safety.



"Ambassador programs with elements of safety work have been implemented across the U.S. by cities, neighborhoods, and community groups, including at least a half dozen locally in Cuyahoga County," explained Mayor George. "The model will use trained personnel to provide a stable, friendly presence in our parks, interacting in a positive way with the public while also helping to identify and report potential safety issues before they arise or escalate." The Mayor noted that the ambassadors will wear easily identifiable uniforms and ride bicycles to traverse the parks and provide a visible presence.

Neighborhood Safety Specialists will patrol 5 Lakewood parks (Lakewood, Madison, Cove, Kauffman, Wagar) on foot and bike to provide a stable, friendly, presence. Part of their duties will involve being on the lookout for and serving as a deterrent to unwanted behavior and activity to identify and report potential issues before they arise or escalate.

Ambassadors will be in our community parks on a seasonal basis and will be active seven days a week from 1:30pm-10:00pm.

Want to learn more and apply for the position?

Visit [blockbyblock.com](http://blockbyblock.com), click on the green "apply" icon in the top right corner of the page, go to the "where" search bar and type in Lakewood, Oh and this will bring up "Neighborhood Safety Specialist" for Lakewood (job req is #BBB-1604) then simply apply.

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## Save the Date! 2023 State of the City Address

Please join us at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 13th at the Cove Community Center as Mayor Meghan F. George delivers her 2023 State of the City Address.



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## We are Hiring!

The City of Lakewood is currently seeking applicants for the following openings:

- City Planner
- Fleet or Entry Level Mechanic

For more information and to apply, please click [here](#).

